Higher Education Horizon Scanning

A systematic examination of factors impacting the future of your institution

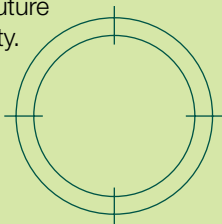**IFF Research**

Higher Education Horizon Scanning

The current dynamic political environment has created one of the most significant periods of change that the UK Higher Education sector has ever known.

Horizon scanning is a systematic examination of factors impacting the future, to plan the most effective response. Our methodology facilitates deeper understanding of the internal and external risks and opportunities that have the potential to impact the future of your institution.

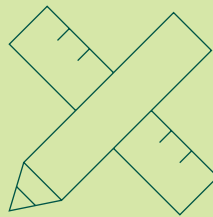## The Horizon Scanning research process

Define

Horizon scanning begins by defining your research question, relating to specific internal or external environmental factors, impacting the future of your university.
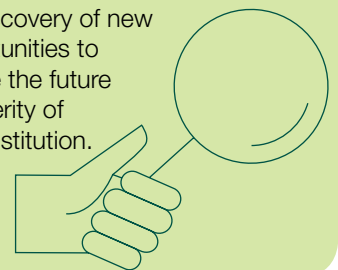
Design

We will work closely with you to design the most appropriate research solution, this could involve: UK or international policy analysis, Secondary data analysis or Primary data collection.

Discover

Presentation of your research findings by the IFF Higher Education team will facilitate the discovery of new opportunities to ensure the future prosperity of your institution.

Applying this process to identify solutions

Q: How can we diversify international student recruitment to decrease future dependence on EU students?

Horizon Scanning solution: our approach would include analysis of your existing international student pipeline, the latest HESA student record data, economic and demographic drivers impacting future market growth and primary quantitative research to understand the perception of your institution's offer in new recruitment markets.

Q: How can we gauge the reputation of my institution amongst local, regional and national employers?

Horizon Scanning solution: our approach would include analysis of the latest AGR survey, local or regional competitor graduate employment rates via DLHE/Graduate Outcomes data, and primary data collection to benchmark your institution's reputation amongst chosen employers.

Q: How can we gain deeper insight into student satisfaction beyond existing formal metrics?
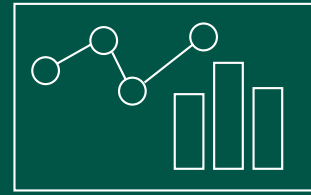
Horizon Scanning solution: our approach would include analysis of internal data collected to measure course performance and student satisfaction, recent strategic developments on your campus and primary data collected using higher education ethnography to link student satisfaction rates to your university's strategy and KPI's.

Q: How can we gauge the appetite for Degree Apprenticeships amongst prospective students and local employers?

Horizon Scanning solution: our approach would include analysis of recent government guidelines on delivery criteria, your university's vision and current academic strengths, and primary qualitative research to understand needs and requirements of local employers and prospective students.

Horizon Scanning methodology

Our expertise in Higher Education research, gained through working closely with universities, national sector agencies and government departments, has allowed us to refine our Horizon Scanning methodology. Central to this method is knowledge of, and experience using, secondary data in combination with the careful selection of primary research methods designed to fit your objectives, institutional setting and budget.

Primary research methods for the Higher Education setting

The IFF Higher Education team are adept at constructing primary research solutions involving students, graduates, university staff and employers. Designed in response to your unique institutional context and strategic information needs.

Primary research methods used as part of our methodology include: Higher Education ethnography, online student and practitioner communities, mobile adaptive quantitative online surveys, face to face and online qualitative interviews, face to face and online focus groups, student polls, student peer interviews, classroom observation and employer workshops.
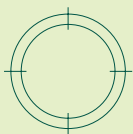
Secondary data analysis informing Higher Education

Universities gather multiple rich and insightful data via in house evaluation and reporting processes. This data, in combination with additional trusted sources, provide a powerful research resource, and the basis for our Horizon Scanning method.

Additional data we use as part of our methodology also include: HESA Student, Graduate, Staff and Provider data; Destination of Leavers from Higher Education; UCAS; National Student Survey; Department for Education Employer Skills Survey; Office for National Statistics; UNESCO Institute for Statistics.

Horizon Scanning case study

In 2018 the IFF Higher Education team were commissioned to systematically examine models currently used by UK universities to support and stimulate the growth of graduate creative enterprise.
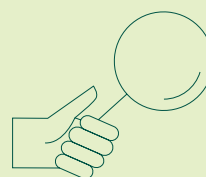
Define

How do universities support students and graduates to identify and reach their creative and professional aspirations? What role is played by local business? Which models ensure the future sustainability of graduate enterprise initiatives?

Identifying sustainable models for Higher Education creative enterprise

Design

Analysis of *HESA's Higher Education Business and Community Interaction survey.* A full examination of the Higher Education creative enterprise landscape, auditing programmes delivered in 167 universities to identify models of best practice. In-depth interviews with 12 institutions and sector bodies delivering excellence in creative enterprise and entrepreneurship.

Discover

Presentation of recommendations to inform the design of a new creative enterprise initiative, with focus given to sustainable funding and cooperation with local business.

IFF's Higher Education research team

IFF's Higher Education team are proud to deliver insights that have supported the development of the sector for several decades, working with national sector agencies and Higher Education providers. Our senior team share expertise in the UK and internationally, and a significant portfolio of methodological knowledge and experience. They are supported by a large and growing team of Higher Education analysts and policy experts.

Elizabeth Shepherd, Director

Elizabeth has worked in international higher education research for over a decade with expertise in Horizon scanning, international student mobility, student perception analysis and decision making in the UK and internationally. Her previous experience involves managing large scale international research projects with higher education institutions and government departments.

David Vivian, Director

David has specialised in Higher Education research at IFF for almost 20 years leading numerous high profile studies including TEF for DfE, Learning Gain for HEFCE/OfS, the Longitudinal DLHE series for HESA, cognitive testing of the NSS and Graduate Outcomes surveys and a recent study mapping internationalisation in European universities for the European Association of International Education.

Catherine Turner, Director

Catherine joined IFF Research as a graduate over 10 years ago. She was pivotal in the delivery of HESA's Longitudinal DLHE study and has worked on evaluations for BIS and DfE on Postgraduate education. Her experience includes assessing the impact of brand on international student recruitment and research to inform the design and development of university course offerings.

Jan Shury, Managing Director

Jan has worked in research for more than 20 years, across a range of sectors and disciplines, with a special focus on Learning & Skills and Higher Education. Jan has been Managing Director of IFF Research since 2007, and has overseen the organisations growth to a company in the £10m+ turnover bracket, employing more than 250 people.

Take the first step towards the horizon...

We understand the need for flexibility and value for money and strive to design a research solution that fulfils your research requirements within your budget. Reach out to a member of our team or email highereducation@iffresearch.com for further information.

Contact our Higher Education team

✉ highereducation@iffresearch.com
☎ 0207 250 3035
🖥 www.iffresearch.com